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**Adoption of the report of the Committee on its
fifty-sixth session**

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Alek Yermalovich (Belarus)

Addendum**Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019**

(Item 3 (b) (ii))

Programme 11**Environment**

1. At its 14th meeting, on 8 June 2016, the Committee considered programme 11, Environment, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6 (Prog. 11)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the proposed strategic framework, contained in conference room paper E/AC.51/2016/CRP.1/Rev.1.

2. The Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed support and appreciation for programme 11, Environment, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 and commended the overall work of UNEP. It was recalled that the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP had considered the programme of work, and appreciation was expressed for the opportunity given to Member States to be actively involved in that process. Clarification was sought on the status of the transformation process of the United Nations Environment Assembly and where UNEP was at present.



4. It was noted that the proposed strategic framework tracked closely with the programme of work and medium-term strategy for the period 2018-2021 of UNEP. Delegations expressed pleasure with the plan and strategy. Some delegations welcomed changes and improvement to the framework, while other delegations expressed concern at specific changes and sought information on reasons for the changes and the related mandates. Information was sought on the reason for the proposed strategic framework not indicating the individual divisions responsible for the implementation of each subprogramme.
5. The view was expressed that the technical work of UNEP could assist countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
6. Clarification was sought on how regional coordination was addressed, as the document appeared to focus on the global dimension. The importance of regional coordination was highlighted, as was its role in avoiding duplication of effort.
7. Some delegations noted the specific challenges reflected in paragraph 11.4 in connection with the UNEP medium-term strategy for the period 2018-2021, which had been built on the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
8. Regarding subprogramme 1, Climate change, the view was expressed that there was a conceptual difference between social and environmental benefits and non-carbon benefits. In that regard, decision 18/CP.21 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the issues related to non-carbon benefits was recalled in relation to the focus on decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks in Developing Countries (REDD-plus). It was stressed that indicator of achievement (c) (ii) did not conform with agreed language and that indicator of achievement (c) (i) seemed to have a restrictive approach, as greenhouse emission reduction was not limited only to REDD-plus.
9. Queries were raised on the relationship between UNEP and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the role of UNEP in the Conference of the Parties. The convening of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties in Paris and the historic signing of the Paris Agreement were recalled.
10. As regards several paragraphs, including paragraphs 11.16 and 11.28, which referred to the collaboration between UNEP and a number of other organizations, clarification was sought as to whether partnerships were made with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and it was suggested to do so if that was not the case. It was also suggested that the Economic Cooperation Organization, of particular importance to Central Asia and the question of the pollution of the Caspian Sea, be included in paragraph 11.16 of the strategy of subprogramme 2, Resilience to disasters and conflicts. In paragraph 11.28, collaboration with the Rule of Law Unit was highlighted and clarification sought on the nature of the collaboration.
11. It was noted that the title of subprogramme 3 had been changed from "Ecosystem management" to "Healthy and productive ecosystems". The view was

expressed that the previous title was geared towards activity and projects, whereas the new title focused more on the end results. The content of the subprogramme had also changed, with the focus more towards indicators than activity and projects. Clarification was sought on the reason for the change in approach. Queries were also raised on transboundary collaboration frameworks. As regards expected accomplishment (a), the view was expressed that the question of transboundary collaboration frameworks would be better addressed in the context of existing frameworks.

12. The Committee noted that the concept of transboundary collaboration frameworks was vague and needed to be better defined. The institutional framework of such cooperation among States was clearly defined by environmental international organizations; mentions of transboundary cooperation frameworks should take into consideration the respective frameworks of those organizations.

13. With respect to subprogramme 4, Environmental governance, in particular paragraph 11.26 of the strategy, which indicated that UNEP would promote stronger national institutions, better enforcement capacities and enhanced policies and laws, the view was expressed that it would be more appropriate to use the phrase "support the promotion of" instead of "promote", as it appeared to go beyond the mandate of UNEP.

14. With respect to subprogramme 5, Chemicals, waste and air quality, the incorporation of the issue of air quality was welcomed, and the view was expressed that UNEP was ideally positioned to implement related activities. A positive view was expressed by a delegation on the strengthening of the science-policy interface.

15. It was pointed out that subprogramme 6, Resource efficiency, included the issue of trade, and the view was expressed that the trade dimension should be discussed in other relevant contexts and not brought into the discussions under UNEP.

16. Concerns were raised on the use of the term "green economy", with references being made to the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Delegations expressed the view that the green economy concept was only one of the tools available to achieve sustainable development and that it did not address all three pillars of sustainable development. Questions were also raised about the use of the phrase "inclusive green economy". Delegations stressed that intergovernmentally agreed concepts should not be reopened by the Secretariat and that the nomenclature used in the programme must adhere strictly to agreed concepts, in particular the wording "green economy in the context of sustainable development", as agreed by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Similarly, concern was raised at the use of the concept "decoupling economic growth," considering the technical difficulties in the measurement of that concept.

17. With respect to subprogramme 7, Environment under review, the need to enhance and open access to data was stressed. It was stated that subprogramme 7 for the period 2016-2017 had included activities on sustainable consumption and production, and clarification was sought as to whether the related activities had been moved to another subprogramme for the period 2018-2019 under review.

18. Information was sought on how the strengthening of the regular budget had allowed UNEP to increase its efficiency, become more results-based and improve regional programme delivery.

19. Clarification was sought on whether, should the resolution on sand and dust storms be approved by the General Assembly, it could be added to the list of mandates.

Conclusions and recommendations

20. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 11, Environment, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, subject to the following modifications:

Subprogramme 1

Climate change

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with "To strengthen the ability of countries to transition to low-emission economic development and enhance their adaptation and resilience to climate change".

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace expected accomplishment (b) with "Energy efficiency is improved and the use of renewable energy is increased in countries to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants as part of their low-emission development".

In expected accomplishment (c), replace "as well as social and environmental benefits" with ", recognizing the importance of non-carbon benefits resulting from such policies and measures, including social and environmental co-benefits".

Indicators of achievement

Delete indicator of achievement (c) (ii).

Strategy

Paragraph 11.7

In the second sentence, delete "; and (c) implementing policies that achieve quantifiable carbon, social and environmental benefits".

Paragraph 11.11

Replace paragraph 11.11 with the following:

"11.1 UNEP and its partners in the Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will continue to help countries to respond to the Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus for accessing results-based payments. UNEP will work to support countries on carbon stock management in terrestrial ecosystems for better and multiple benefits. It will also work with the private sector to support the development of innovative financing options. It will facilitate knowledge-sharing mechanisms and

communication and outreach across sectors, including for better and multiple benefits. Through this, UNEP will support the integration of non-carbon benefits from REDD-plus and other natural solutions for climate change mitigation.”

Subprogramme 2
Resilience to disasters and conflicts

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with “To support countries in increasingly preventing and reducing the environmental impacts of disasters and conflicts, while building resilience to future crises”.

Subprogramme 4
Environmental governance

Objective of the Organization

Replace “Policy coherence and strong legal and institutional frameworks” with “To foster policy coherence and strong legal and institutional frameworks to”.

Strategy

Paragraph 11.26

In the first sentence, replace “promote” with “support the promotion of”.

Paragraph 11.28

In the first sentence, after “FAO”, insert “the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,”.

Subprogramme 5
Chemicals, waste and air quality

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with “To promote sound management of chemicals and waste and to improve air quality in order to enable a healthier environment and better health for all”.

Subprogramme 6
Resource efficiency

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with “To support countries’ transition to sustainable development through multiple pathways, including green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns”.

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

In expected accomplishment (a), replace “inclusive green economy and sustainable trade” with “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication”.

Indicators of achievement

In indicator of achievement (a) (i), replace “inclusive green economy, sustainable consumption and production, and sustainable trade policies” with “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication”.

Strategy

Paragraph 11.44

In the first sentence, replace “inclusive green economy and sustainable trade” with “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication”.

In the second sentence, replace “unsustainable resource use” with “environmental degradation”.

Paragraph 11.46

In the first sentence, replace “inclusive green economy” with “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” and delete “sustainable trade”.

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

Add “70/195 Combating sand and dust storms”.

Subprogramme 1

Insert the following:

“Decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”

“9-15/CP.19 Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus”

“18/CP.21 Methodological issues related to non-carbon benefits resulting from the implementation of the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70”